

Flood Risk Assessment

Site:

Henley Cricket Club, Matson Drive, Remenham, Henley on Thames, RG9 3DB

Date:

June 2026

1 Introduction

This Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared in support of a planning application for the installation of safety netting along the western boundary of Henley Cricket Club. The proposal comprises a series of slender vertical posts, approximately 10 metres in height, supporting retractable netting designed to prevent cricket balls from leaving the site and to improve safety for neighbouring properties and road users.

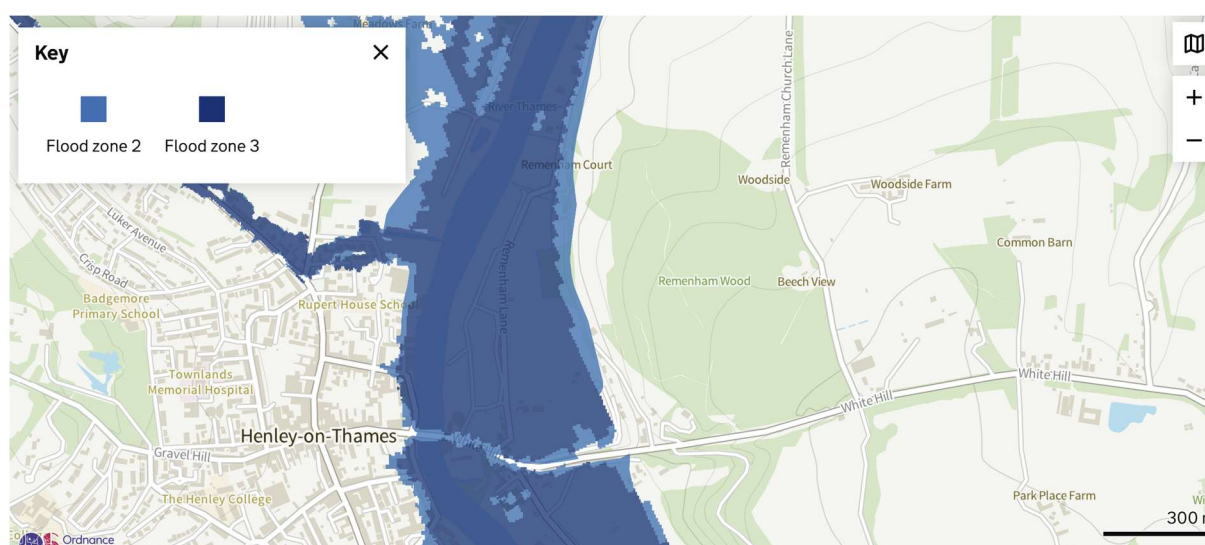
The application site lies within Flood Zone 3, and a site-specific assessment is therefore required in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policy. This document assesses the level of flood risk affecting the site and demonstrates that the proposed development is appropriate for its location, will remain safe for its lifetime, and will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

2 Site Description

Henley Cricket Club is located to the east of Henley-on-Thames in a rural setting outside defined settlement limits and within the Green Belt. The site consists of an established cricket ground characterised by a centrally located playing pitch and limited built development concentrated along the northern boundary.

The western boundary of the site runs alongside Remenham Lane and is defined by a mature hedgerow and a line of trees, forming a clear vegetated edge between the cricket ground and the public highway. The surrounding topography is generally flat, reflecting the site's position within the River Thames floodplain.

The proposed development is limited in extent and involves no buildings or significant ground coverage. It consists solely of vertical posts and associated netting, with only small localised foundations required.



Source: extract from Flood Map for Planning gov.uk service

3. Planning Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that development in areas at risk of flooding is carefully controlled to ensure that it is safe and does not increase flood risk elsewhere. Development should be directed away from areas at highest risk where possible, and where development is necessary, it must be demonstrated that it will be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk.

At the local level, Policy CC09 of the Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Local Plan requires that development proposals appropriately manage flood risk, avoid increasing surface water runoff, and ensure that natural drainage patterns are maintained.

This assessment has been prepared in line with these requirements.

4. Flood Risk Classification and Sequential Test

The proposed development is considered to fall within a category of development that is compatible with flood risk areas due to its lightweight, open, and largely permeable nature. The safety netting does not introduce habitable accommodation or vulnerable uses, nor does it involve significant built form.

Water-compatible development

- Flood control infrastructure.
- Water transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sewage transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sand and gravel working.
- Docks, marinas and wharves.
- Navigation facilities.
- Ministry of Defence installations.
- Ship building, repairing and dismantling, dockside fish processing and refrigeration and compatible activities requiring a waterside location.
- Water-based recreation (excluding sleeping accommodation).
- Lifeguard and coastguard stations.
- Amenity open space, nature conservation and biodiversity, outdoor sports and recreation and essential facilities such as changing rooms.
- Essential ancillary sleeping or residential accommodation for staff required by uses in this category, subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan.

Flood Zones	Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification				
	Essential infrastructure	Highly vulnerable	More vulnerable	Less vulnerable	Water compatible
Zone 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 2	✓	Exception Test required	✓	✓	✓
Zone 3a †	Exception Test required †	✗	Exception Test required	✓	✓
Zone 3b *	Exception Test required *	✗	✗	✗	✓*

Key:

✓ Development is appropriate

In practical terms, the development is directly associated with, and necessary for, the ongoing use of the cricket ground. As such, it must be located adjacent to the existing playing field and cannot reasonably be relocated to an area of lower flood risk. On this basis, the proposal is considered to satisfy the requirements of the Sequential Test.

5. Assessment of Flood Risk

The primary source of flood risk at the site is fluvial flooding associated with the River Thames. The site's location within Flood Zone 3 indicates a high probability of flooding during extreme events. However, the nature of the proposed development means that it is inherently resilient to such flooding.

The netting system consists of open mesh supported by slender posts, all of which allow water to pass freely through and around the structure. The proposal does not introduce solid barriers, enclosed volumes, or raised land levels that could obstruct flood flows or displace floodwater. As a result, the development will not impede floodplain storage or alter flood routing.

Surface water flood risk is likewise minimal. The proposal does not involve the creation of impermeable surfaces or hardstanding, and the small-scale foundations required for the posts represent a negligible intervention in the ground. The Lead Local Flood Authority has confirmed that the development is unlikely to materially affect surface water runoff or drainage patterns, indicating that the proposal presents a low flood risk in principle.

Groundwater effects are expected to be negligible given the limited depth and extent of excavation required. Any foundations will be localised and constructed in a manner that does not disrupt subsurface flow or create pathways for water movement.

The development itself is not vulnerable to flooding. In the event of a flood, the structure would remain operationally unaffected, and there would be no risk to occupants, as it does not facilitate human occupation or contain sensitive uses.

6. Drainage Considerations

The proposal maintains the existing drainage characteristics of the site. As no new impermeable surfaces are introduced, there will be no increase in runoff rates or change to the hydrological behaviour of the land.

During installation, care will be taken to ensure that post foundations do not interfere with existing surface water flow routes or create localised obstructions. Excavation works will be kept to a minimum, and the ground will be reinstated following installation to preserve existing conditions.

The Lead Local Flood Authority has advised that, provided such measures are followed, the impact on drainage will be negligible and acceptable in planning terms.

7. Mitigation and Flood Resilience

Although the development presents very limited flood risk, its design inherently incorporates resilience to flood conditions. The open and permeable nature of the netting ensures that water can pass through without resistance, while the slender posts minimise any interaction with flood flows.

Construction will be undertaken in a manner that avoids unnecessary disturbance to the ground and ensures that natural drainage patterns are preserved. The development does not require active flood defence measures, as it is fully compatible with its floodplain setting.

8. Residual Risk and Climate Change

The potential effects of climate change, including increased flood frequency and intensity, have been taken into account. The proposed development remains appropriate under future flood scenarios due to its lack of sensitivity to flooding and its minimal physical impact on the floodplain.

Because the structure does not rely on flood protection measures, and does not introduce vulnerable uses, there is no increase in residual risk over time. Its continued operation will not be compromised by changes in flood behaviour.

9. Conclusion

This Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the proposed safety netting at Henley Cricket Club is appropriate within Flood Zone 3 and fully compliant with national and local planning policy.

The development is of a type that is compatible with flood risk areas, does not introduce vulnerability, and does not interfere with flood flows or storage. It will not increase flood risk elsewhere and will remain safe for its lifetime without the need for significant mitigation measures.

The Lead Local Flood Authority has confirmed that the proposal represents a low flood risk in principle and is unlikely to have any material impact on drainage or surface water behaviour.

On this basis, there are no flood risk constraints that would prevent planning permission from being granted for the proposed development.